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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to make basic social science education more responsive to the needs of students in a rapidly changing society, the authors developed and conducted an experimental course entitled "Economics and Politics in a Changing Society" (EPICS). The goals of this course include improvement in thinking ability and creativeness, progress in communicativeness, expansion of knowledge, and the cultivation of feelings. The course attempts to reach these goals through self-directed learning and social problem solving. This paper explains in-depth reasons for suggesting an alternative to the traditional introductory curriculum, reasons related to the changing character of contemporary society and changing orientations toward the learning process. The reason a course such as EPICS is inconsistent with the traditional value structure of the university and the social sciences is examined. Lastly, it is suggested that EPICS as education for liberation might provide a model for the radical reconstruction of social science education at the university level. (Author/DE)

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ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN A CHANGING SOCIETY:

A NEW APPROACH TO TEACHING A BEGINNING SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSE

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ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN A CHANGING SOCIETY:

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The process of adapting to new cultural versions of reality has recently been portrayed vividly in the trilogy of encounters by the anthropologist Carlos Casteneda with the Yaqui sorcerer, Don Juan. In these works, Castaneda describes his apprenticeship with the Indian medicine man in which Castaneda was taught the use of various hallucinogenic substances in developing a mastery of the world of "non-ordinary reality." In order to become a "man of knowledge," Castaneda was led through a series of experiences which introduced him to a completely new world, one incomprehensible to the Western mind. In the introduction to The Teachings of Don Juan, Walter Goldschmidt remarks, "The central importance of entering in to worlds other than our own . . . lies in the fact that the experience leads us to understand that our own world is also a cultural construct."[1] By understanding the reality of another culture, we come to understand our own reality as culturally based. We also come to understand more about the learning process which allows us to enter into that reality.

Obviously, there are other cultures and other realities existing alongside ours, but there are also new realities awaiting us within our own culture. The world of tomorrow will be so

radically different from the world of today that it will be unrecognizable through the lenses of present-day reality. Benjamin Ward refers to ours as a "Velikovskyan world,"[2] a world in which ". . . our laws are subject to frequent and even sudden change," and one where ". . . nature is constantly taking back some portion of the information we have won from her over the years about the economy."[3] Even more important, the future being described is not distant but reasonably close. This means that the transition from today to tomorrow will be extremely rapid; indeed, the process of change itself may be as demanding as the new social structures toward which we move. As several writers have commented, unless we are prepared for the future, we may be in for quite a shock. And unless we are able to contend with the future, we may not survive it.

As change occurs with increasing rapidity, our educational system should adapt by turning out people who have the skills which are basic to dealing with change. As Toffler puts it, the student ". . . must learn to anticipate the directions and rate of change," and also ". . . learn to make repeated, probabalistic and increasingly long-range assumptions about the future."[4] Even this, however, presumes a basically defensive position for the student toward change. For those who want only to be able to cope with change as it occurs, perhaps this is sufficient. But we feel that students should be given a learning environment which is conducive

to the development of skills for positive social change. A rapidly changing society requires people who can act to implement desirable social change, and not just react once changes are observed.

In an attempt to make basic social science education more responsive to the needs of students in a rapidly changing society, we have developed and conducted an experimental social science course titled, "Economics and Politics in a Changing Society" (EPICS). Our intention in designing EPICS was to provide an innovative, interdisciplinary student-centered alternative to the traditional introductory courses in the social sciences. Moreover, we sought to develop a situation in which students would not simply learn, but would grow--in terms of expression, creativity, empathy, tolerance, and love. In this paper, we will explain in some depth our reasons for suggesting an alternative to the traditional inductory curriculum, reasons related to the changing character of contemporary society and changing orientations toward the learning process. In the course of this discussion, we will have occasion to examine why a course such as EPICS is inconsistent with the traditional value structure of the university and the social sciences. Alternatively, we will suggest that EPICS--as education for liberation--might provide a model for the radical reconstruction of social science education at the university level.

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND THE CLASSROOM

We take as a basic premise that education should serve to

liberate the human spirit, to allow for the fullest and most complete expression of the human potential. While most educators would agree with this statement in principle, pedagodical practice often acts to the contrary, preventing the natural or normal expression and development of the individual student. Specifically, we will argue here that our current approach to social science education--both in content and method--limits the growth of active and creative learners while at the same time maintaining both a university-based and a community-based system of elite domination. While proclaiming its commitment to the enhancement of personal knowledge, the university permits its classrooms and its teachers to operate in such a way as to promote passivity and deference, which are translated into the community as apathy and obedience.

Specifically, contemporary social science instruction serves to depress the potential for economic or political change by denying persons access to the skills necessary for meeting change in the post-modern age. While the nature of social change demands much more from the educational system than ever before, social science education has not responded to these demands. Existing orientations are designed to make students merely "fit in" the larger society, rather than allowing them to act constructively to improve that society. Instead of expressing their individual personalities, students are taught to conform to existing patterns of behavior. Instead of looking to the future as an unfulfilled

possibility, students are taught to look to the present as inevitable.

There are many reasons that social science education plays such a restrictive role. We will discuss two reasons for the system-maintaining character of science instruction today--our image of social science and our image of appropriate classroom behavior. Following this discussion we will suggest an alternative learning strategy which may aid in overcoming the present patterns.

Our image of social science. The image of social scientific knowledge which most social educators hold today has imporatant, though largely unrecognized implications for social science education. Beginning with the most basic choice of the social scientist, the decision to impute to social events the same regularity and "naturalness" of physical events, social scientists have currently accepted image of social science, one based on a commitment to positivism, directs teachers and students to certain types of activities which limit the development of learning experiences appropriate to confronting alternative realities. The impact of the broad cultural image which we will call the positive science view limits students to experiences consistent with the maintenance of existing structures of social power.

The most obvious case in point is the operation of the fact-value distinction as a basis for teacher behavior. Acting in line with an interpretation of science which suggests that objectivity can only be achieved through a dichotomization of fact and value,

the positive science view suggests that teachers strive for the same type of objective in their classrooms. Supposedly, the way to do this is to separate clearly what is taught into these two categories, emphasizing fact and purging value wherever possible. As Sanford Levinson writes, "The role of the teacher becomes one of presenting facts, having mastered the relevant data of his field."[5] The job of the teacher is to put forth factual material, avoiding "value judgments" and allowing the student to draw his own conclusions.

This approach is deficient from several standpoints. First, value judgements are inevitable, and when made, represent the values of the teacher, or the authors of "scientific" works, and not those of students. Each teacher has his or her own set of values and these values influence the basic decision of choice of topics to be covered or emphasized. Traditionally, students are presented with a syllabus which outlines the topics which the teacher considers worthy of their consideration in the course. Or perhaps, these topics will simply be determined by the choice of a textbook which is presented to the student as the "material to be learned." Inevitably, these choices reflect the values of the teacher which may be quite different from those of the students. Thus, while claiming value-neutrality as a teaching strategy, the teacher unconsciously imposes his own value judgments on the students, while restricting their own choices.

A more subtle way in which values creep into the learning process is through the use of language and communication. There is strong evidence to suggest that one can draw value-laden conclusions from factual statements. The tendency to derive "ought" from "is" is described by Ward as ". . . the connotative urge to action that accompanies many denotatively descriptive statements in ordinary language."[6] The problem is that

> . . . a great deal of meaning is imbedded in this performative aspect of language, that it is not clear that one can separate the performative from the descriptive aspects without distorting the former, and that in particular, attempts at logical or syntactical separations are especially distorting on meaning.[7]

The possibility that words and deeds will become confused is another indication that facts and values are hopelessly intertwined. The fact that values can appear in these ways would not be so serious except that the positivist methodology prevents the serious discussion of values. This serves to perpetuate existing value-orientations and restricts the formation of new and different ones.

Another difficulty with the fact-value distinction as it intrudes upon the educational process is its insistence on education as the simple transmission of "objective data." Alternatively, one might conceive of learning as freeing the learner in order that he comprehensively examines the valuational consequences of his activities. This means in part that learning should lead the student to examine not simply what is but also what might be, to explore the possibilities of the future as well as the actualities of the past. As

Sanford Levinson writes,

> It is the (social scientists) responsibility . . . to make the student aware of those ways in which reality can be changed. It is the teacher's responsibility to focus on aspects of the world which the student would prefer not to examine; the teacher should, that is, make his students uncomfortable with their ideas by making them cognizant of the costs of action or inaction.[8]

Social science education then can be more than simply relating existing circumstances (and thereby intensifying that reality); it can also be creative and constructive.

While the fact-value distinction is an important limitation on social science education, there are other aspects of the positive science view which also tend to restrict the development of independent learners. One of the principle difficulties is the cumulative view of scientific knowledge which the positive science image portrays and which Thomas Kuhn analyzes in his excellent discussion of scientific textbooks.[9] Kuhn points out that the impression left by science texts (and social science texts are certainly no exception) is that the scientific enterprise is a highly cumulative, non-conflictual process. In Kuhn's words,

> . . . often seemed to imply that the content of science is uniquely exemplified by the observations, laws and theories described in their pages. Almost as regularly, the same books have been read as saying that scientific methods are simply the ones illustrated by the manipulative techniques used in gathering textbook data, together with the logical operations employed when relating those data to the textbook's theoretical generalizations.[10]

Of course, as Kuhn points out, the text does not provide an accurate

representation of the scientific process, but instead presents a view of science almost entirely ahistorical. By presenting the results of the scientific process, the text conceals the history of the process itself.

In actuality, science is a highly complex progression of research, postulation, and conflict, in which only the most powerful patterns of explanation become accepted by the scientific community as "paradigms" for scientific research. Reading the texts, one is lulled into believing that science is more than an activity of human beings, persons with clear interests in exerting or preserving their own particular viewpoint. One tends to neglect the controversy, indeed outright conflict, that accompanies a "scientific revolution."

Furthermore, according to some writers, current textbooks are more guilty of this narrow view of reality than were earlier versions. As Ward puts it, "The reader of standard texts will find far less concern with the possibility of alternative interpretations that are fundamentally different in their implications than can be found in earlier neoclassical works of comparable aim, such as Marshall's Principles."[11] For the student, this textbook view of science suggests that the scientific interpretation of reality is not only the correct interpretation of reality, it is the only interpretation of reality. Thus the student fails to realize that competing versions of scientific explanation vie for prominence and that the text versions only represent the winner in this conflict. The result is

an over-dependence on texts, textbook knowledge, and "objective" science, along with a failure to realize the importance of self-generated knowledge and subjective interpretation by viewing science as something beyond the realm of the student to change, the student submits to the scientific version of reality.

Traditional classroom behavior. The limiting effect of the particular structure of knowledge that is brought into the introductory social science class is reinforced by the patterns of behavior found in the traditional classroom. In the classroom, as elsewhere, persons learn from their experiences. They learn by responding to the expectations of others and the expectations they come to have about their own behavior. Traditional classroom behavior is based on certain assumptions about the role of the teacher, the role of the student, and their relationship to one another. The teacher is assumed to be active, independent, knowledgeable, mature, rigorous, indentifiable, and honest; the student is assumed to be passive, dependent, lacking knowledge, immature, careless, anonymous, and even somewhat dishonest. Based on these assumptions about the participants in the classroom relationship, an entire set of social expectations develops and works to enforce a highly authoritarian value structure and an instrumental approach to learning.

The value structure of the traditional classroom is without question highly authoritarian. Most classrooms begin with a physical setting in which the role of the teacher as the central

figure in the room is well established. Chairs are lined in impersonal rows facing a table or lectern at the front of the room. The heirarchy which is implied by the spatial arrangement of the room is made quite explicit by the behavior of teachers and students. The teacher is (or tries to be) in complete command of the classroom; he is the one who initiates any activities; and he expects both attention and obedience from his student subjects. Most students, having experienced few alternative patterns, accept this arrangement. While they often try to beat the system, they are rarely inclined to challenge it.

The value structure inherent in traditional classroom behavior is especially important in that students not only learn from the content of the course (if they do learn that!), but also from the behavior patterns in the classroom.

> What students do in the classroom is what they learn (as Dewey would say), and what they learn to do is the classroom's message (as McLuhan would say). Now, what it is that students do in the classroom? Well, mostly, they sit and listen to the teacher. Mostly, they are required to remember. They are almost never required to make observations, formulate definitions, or perform any intellectual operations that go beyond repeating what someone else says is true. They are rarely encouraged to ask substantive questions, although they are permitted to ask about administrative and technical details. (How long should the paper be? Does the spelling count? When is the assignment due?) It is practically unheard of for students to play any role in determining what problems are worth studying or what procedures of inquiry ought to be used.[12]

In the classroom, the medium clearly has a message. And that message is that there are clear lines of social authority which

must not be violated under any circumstances. In other words, traditional classroom behavior serves as an extremely effective agent of socialization, one geared toward the maintenance of hierarchical patterns of authority.

Closely associated with the authoritarian value structure of traditional classroom behavior is the instrumental orientation toward education which characterizes most educational institutions. Instrumentalism in the classroom takes several forms--the subject matter is viewed in an instrumental way, the learning process becomes viewed in an instrumental way, and as a result the values of instrumentalism are passed on to the student. Most classrooms are geared to the transmittal of specific information, the body of which is defined in advance by the teacher. Most of this information is justified by social science teachers as useful information, that is, information which will help the student accomplish some stated goal. Information selected and viewed in this way can never be fully meaningful to the student; it is not in any way important in and of itself. As a result, information passed about the classroom easily becomes quite dull and lifeless.

But the lifelessness of the subject matter is even surpassed by the lifelessness of the educational process which is designed to transmit this data. Students are presented with motivational schemes which are highly instrumental: "In order to get a degree, you must perform the following tasks: pass these courses, get these grades, and attend commencement." As a result, the values of

instrumental rather than expressive behavior are transmitted. Students are not encouraged to make broad social choices, but rather to develop thier capacities to pursue socially approved goals.

One feature of the instrumental orientation of the educational system is that skills or competencies in social change are rarely very high among the priorities of the school system. Where competency-based instruction does occur (and this is rare, given the social scientific bias of the instructors), skills in social change are ususlly omitted. The educational system generally encourages students to learn on command, to be passive in the classroom, to accept without question the hierarchical relationships, and to work for the external reward of a grade. As Edwards and MacEwan put it, ". . . one of the functions of the educational system in the United States is to prepare students for the authoritarian and repressive conditions of the work place."[13] Specifically, the school system is interested in promoting skills which will enhance the status quo, not those that would seek to alter it.

One final comment on traditional classroom behavior should be made. Relationships in the traditional classroom are almost exclusively vertical, i.e., between the teacher and the student. They are very rarely horizontal, i.e., between student and student. Indeed, to some extent, the existence of such relationships is considered a threat to the order of the classroom. This practice has

at least two very damaging effects. First, it prevents students from learning from one another. In any collection of two or more people, we can be sure that different experiences will have left different perspectives. By exploring the experiences of our colleagues, we can learn a great deal. Each student should be considered by his or her fellow students as an active resource for learning. Second, traditional practices prevent students from developing skills in the kind of basic social interactions which are the key to any social, economic, or political change. Experience in working with others in the solution of problems--in this case learning problems--is itself an important part of social science education.

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES

Education as liberation involves the release of the active and creative forces which reside in each of us as human beings and a focussing of our capacities on the world around us. This involves two central kinds of relationships: getting in touch with yourself, and getting in touch with others.[14] These two themes must extend through every part of the learning process if it is to be effective as a liberating device. Our approach to the basic social science course then is to provide a setting in which students have a chance to examine their own beliefs, to examine evidence related to those beliefs, and to find ways to articulate their conclusions. In addition to these cognitive skills, we feel students should also

develop other more general skills. The following list of course goals elaborates on what might be accomplished.[15] Basically, the course should facilitate:

A. Improvement in Thinking Ability and Creativeness. That is, the expansion of capacities for critical evaluation of anything within one's environment, including one's self, which, in turn, requires the acquisition of skill in observation, in assessment of evidence, and in the estimation of the meaning of whatever is encountered; and the development of talents for creating, both with words and with symbols, objects, or actions.

B. Progress in Communicativeness. or, more specifically, the strengthening of speaking and writing faculties as well as the sharpening of skill in non-verbal communication.

C. Expansion of Knowledge. which means learning as much as possible about the subject matter and techniques of the social and behaviorial science while also acquiring knowledge of the emergence and present nature of modern life.

D. Cultivation of Feelings. in other words, the heightening of empathy, tolerance, and love; in fact, a general elevation of sensitivity to the feelings of one's self and others with a view to the achievement of more harmonious and satisfying social interaction without the loss of personal identity and the attainment of greater personal contentment without apathy (In translation, this means learning how to get along without "fitting in" and "sitting down.")

Education for social change requires more than simply relating supposedly "objective" data; it requires an extensive attention to developing the learning capabilities of the individual student. To the extent that social change involves entering new realities, social education requires skills in encountering and mastering these

alternative realities. In other words, education for social change requires special attention to learning how to learn.

> We are, in my view, faced with an entirely new situation in education where the goal of education, if we are to survive, is the facilitation of change and learning. The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned how to adapt and change; the man who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security. Changingness, a reliance on process rather than upon static knowledge, is the only thing that makes any sense as a goal for education in the modern world.[16]

The social scientist cannot be content to simply pass on today's knowledge, knowing that it may be outdated in a few years or even a few months; he can be attentive to developing the skills necessary to learning about each new situation one encounters.

Expressive learning. To reach the goals listed here students must transcend the ordinary reality of the traditional classroom. In large part, therefore, EPICS is designed as an intense encounter between the individual learner and the world of social experience. By bring ing the most intense social conflicts into focus and by totally involving the individual in those conflicts at the level of felt meaning, we can open new possibilities for activity and creativity on the part of the learner. A student who subjectively and experientially encounters unsettling alternative forms of social reality, forms foreign to and perhaps inconsistent with his own lived experiences, is forced to respond to such experiences. (This is quite different from a student presented with "objective" data

in the traditional classroom; this student need make no response whatever.) The student encountering an alternative view of reality must find some way to reconcile that view with his own structure of social meanings. Under these circumstances, the student is not insulated from questions of value and meaning, but instead is immersed in them. He is presented with bold choices, from which he cannot escape. He must respond.

There are many ways in which an instructor can develop such experiences. While we do not wish to deprecate the value of transmitting specific data through lecture or dialogue, instructors should not feel limited to such modes of communication. Remembering that social meaning is based on preconceptual knowledge, knowledge derived through felt meaning, the instructor may address many senses at once. Clearly in an age of mass media, the imaginative use of audio-visual experiences is especially important in addressing the preconceptual. This does not mean simply substituting films or video-tape lectures for those of the instructor; rather it means bringing many forms of sense experience together in order to operate on many levels of feeling at once. (Unfortunately, the former approach to audio-visual instruction is the most common--and most boring.) For example, multi-media experiences involving slides, films, music, drama, art, poetry, and other forms of expression can be combined in such a way as to represent in dramatic fashion changing realities.

The student can also learn from the social experience of the classroom. By developing authentic relationships with other

students and with instructors, students will develop a base of social experience upon which they can draw in creative dialogue. More explicitly, by working with others in the solution of social problems--whether theoretical problems dealt with in the classroom or practical problems dealt with in the community--students can learn a great deal not only about the subject at hand, but also about the process of learning. Finally, through the use of structured group experiences, students can learn something about the nature of social interaction, including group dynamics, communicative behavior, cooperative endeavor, and so forth.

Learning Experience. The total impact of the approach outlined here, and implemented in EPICS, should be to develop the kind of learning community in which students come to know themselves and come to know others. It should be a situation in which students encounter alternative realities and attach meanings to those realities. In this sequence, the individual learner is an active and creative participant in the learning process. In EPICS we have attempted to enhance the activity and creativity of the students in two distinct ways, through "self-directed learning" and through social problem-solving.

As noted above, traditional classroom behavior posits the student as a passive object to be acted upon by a teacher. Such a condition is contrary to modern theories of adult education, which suggest that learning only occurs when the individual learner is ready to learn.[17] No amount of pleading or coercion can force the

individual to learn at a time other than the "educational moment." While memorization can be induced, internalization cannot. This being the case, the question for the instructor or educational facilitator is under what circumstances will most individuals be most likely to have an interest in learning.

Our response to this problem is embraced in the idea of self-directed learning. By this notion, we mean that the individual learner should ultimately be in control of the learning process and that he should work in cooperation with other learners and other resource people to achieve his learning goals. Self-directed learning does not in any way mean learning in a vacuum. In fact, we feel that three conditions are absolutely necessary in order for independent learning to occur. First, students must feel that they are a real part of a learning community, a social circumstance in which real learning is encouraged and the resources necessary to learning are brought to bear. The kind of intellectual culture implied here can be facilitated by the faculty; however, the learning community is ultimately a product of the interaction of students with other students and with the faculty. Whether a real learning community is achieved is finally--like it or not--up to the students. Second, the topics considered by the individuals and the class must reflect the interests of the members of the group. Traditional classroom behavior holds a view of students as a homogeneous group, alike in their interests and their capabilities. Obviously, this

assumption, if it was ever true, is no longer true. Only by recognizing the variety of the student population can one expect to meet the plurality of interests which come into any class. Again it is the responsibility of the faculty as facilitators of learning to help the students identify and formulate the concerns which the students have, but again the final choice is up to the students. Third, the class must bring together whatever resources are necessary to meet the learning needs of the students. This means that the list of appropriate classroom resources should not be limited to the class staff, but should include other faculty, resource people in the community, and most important other students. The larger the class, the more resources are available to the class. Every effort should be made to fully utilize this very important but easily overlooked pool of information and insight.

Students in EPICS are also encouraged to undertake an individual or group effort in solving some community problem or at least assisting in its solution. Our feeling is that learning how to approach creatively and positively the solution of the most pressing problems of modern society requires experience in dealing with these problems. For this reason, we suggest a number of activities that individuals may undertake. In this way, we hope to develop and maintain a sense of the interconnectedness between what happens outside the university.

Course Design. At the beginning of the semester, the two hundred-fifty students in EPICS engage in a process of indicating

exactly which topics they wish to pursue in the course and which personal problem-solving skills they wish to enhance. In consultation with other students, the staff of EPICS, and other resource people, each student completes an "Issues Analysis" showing which social concerns are most important and in which direction social change would be desired. These forms enable the staff to add topics not yet a part of our core sessions, to shape the sessions we already have in mind, and to divide the students into "Learning Groups," (see below). The "Skills Analysis" form, again completed by the student in consultation with others, allows each student to examine carefully his or her social problem-solving skills and to indicate which of these need further development. Included are skills in general learning (for example, "the ability to accept and use feedback about how you are performing"), skills in analyzing social conditions (for example, "the ability to find and analyze data about social problems"), and skills in social change (for example, "the ability to work effectively and cooperate with others"). A total of nearly thirty items are listed, with the students noting their present level of development and their proposed learning experiences with respect to each of these. Many of these skills should be affected in the general context of EPICS; however, we also make special efforts to help meet special needs. One highly significant need which students indicated in the fall was a need to improve their skills in reading and writing; in response to this

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finding, we designed a special Communications Skills Workshop (led by a graduate student) to help students work independently or with a small group in a non-pressure situation to improve their abilities in this area. Workshop attendance was strictly voluntary, yet about thirty students became involved in this activity.

Since EPICS is oriented toward the development of self-directed learning experiences, classroom activities are directed not only toward imparting specific information, but also toward increasing the students' level of social awareness, posing questions for later consideration, and stimulating interest in a subject through providing model learning experiences. To accomplish these ends, the staff has prepared classroom sessions involving music, slides, film, drama, television, poetry, art, and even lectures. In many cases, a multimedia presentation brings together several forms of communication with great success. In this way, the class as a whole covers such topics as alienation, racism, sexism, poverty, crime, the environment, housing, transportation, and others.

Another side of the classroom operation is the operation of "Learning Groups." Learning Groups are groups of approximately ten students who at various points in the class are brought together to discuss the topics under consideration and to engage in problem solving. The Learning Groups differ from traditional discussion groups in that Learning Groups meet at various times

rather than on a specific schedule, they are totally student-directed, and they form the basis for problem-solving exercises undertaken later in the semester. A conscious attempt is made to help students examine the group dynamics of their learning group experiences in order that these experiences might become more meaningful.

During the second half of the semester, students become involved in problem-solving exercises, that is, individual or group efforts in solving or assisting in the solution of some community problem. These exercises take one of two forms: Community Research Projects (CRP) or Community Action Projects (CAP). CRP's are designed to investigate and gather data about a particular community problem. This data is then made available to action groups to be used as the basis for constructive community action. CAP's are projects in which students participate actively in an on-going effort to deal with a particular community problem. For example, a student might become involved in an anti-pollution campaign or may volunteer for work in a drug-abuse center, or may develop data on mass transit. These projects are useful on either or both of two levels. First, the student projects (either CRP's or CAP's) may yield results that contribute to immediate positive social change. Second, even if no specific social problem is solved as a result of the students' projects, the involvement of students in problem-solving activities will yield definite pedagogical benefits.

Learning how to approach real-world problems will be helpful in the future even if there is no immediate visible social change.

The learning cycle is completed by a dialogic evaluation system which operates within the following guidelines. We feel that only through an exchange of views and a confrontation of ideas can an evaluation system be helpful in suggesting improvements in the learning process. Such an exchange should be marked by a free, open, honest, and complete dialogue in which a true helping relationship can be established. At all points, both the individual learner and the learning society should understand exactly how well they are performing. If a student feels that he or she is not learning, then we should work to find out why not. The place to begin is with the individual. Are there things you could do which would improve your learning? Second, consider the learning group. Is it functioning effectively? If not, how could it be improved? Third, consider overall class activities (including classroom activities). Are they helpful to the learning process? If not, how could they be improved? Wherever deficiencies are found, they should be confronted and corrected.

While EPICS is still in its first year of operation, we feel quite positive about its contribution to our students' education. Not only are they learning something about critical social problems and how they might affect those problems, they are also learning something about themselves. And, in the long run, this may be our most important contribution.

CONCLUSION: AN OBSERVATION ON EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Obviously, the changes that have been suggested here cannot be accomplished by working only at the university level. While our own particular efforts have been directed toward the reform of the introductory social science course, we see these efforts related to a much broader scheme of educational reform. For example, until the family and the school provide an educational setting which is free and open, the university can do little to change previously socialized patterns of behavior. Until the university and the community themselves are educated to the changing learning needs of students today, a single course or even a few courses can do little to alter the educational system. Until new social forces emerge which are supportive of innovative educational designs, the educational change-agent can expect intense psychological pressure to submit to the status quo. Each of these points merits brief additional comment.

Those of us working at the university level need to remember always that the students coming to our classes have been involved in mostly traditional classrooms for at least twelve years. In such time, we can expect that they have generally adapted to the behavior patterns imposed by traditional classroom behavior. For this reason, they will understandably find it difficult to adapt to a completely new learning design, one which represents a significant departure from traditional techniques. In many ways,

students encountering the kind of learning design suggested here will be quite resistant to that design. They will become highly dependent on the teacher as the authority in the classroom, and, as a result, become quite critical of new patterns. This means that the faculty member interested in change must not only develop a new learning design, but must also conceive of ways to move students from where they are in the beginning to this new design. A new learning design must not simply be enforced (as its predecessors were); rather, every effort must be made to provide a transition from one design to another.

Moving in new directions should also not be assumed to have the active support of the university community. Even though university faculty and administrators are often thought of as fairly liberal and progressive on most issues, they are notoriously rigid in terms of educational policy. This means that even where active opposition to change does not exist, there will be a strong tendency for other university personnel to hold back. Any effort at educational change must expect not simply opposition, but lethargy. We know how to deal with opposition (or we think we do); we almost never know how to deal with lethargy.

The final point is that the reform of the educational system will ultimately confront deep and entrenched interests, interests which will attempt to define the change activities as absurd or outlandish. Standard views of social science as well as traditional

patterns of classroom behavior are deeply entrenched. The struggle to develop an educational system designed for liberation rather than repression will be most difficult. For the educational change-agent, it will require a special perseverance, a strong commitment to be able to withstand the psychological pressures to remain the same. The change-agent will have to engage in problem-solving and coping with change. But then that's what it's all about.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Carlos Castaneda, The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968, vii).

[2]Benjamin Ward, What's Wrong With Economics? (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972), p. 50.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Alvin Toffler, Future Shock (New York: Random House, 1970).

[5]Sanford Levinson, "On 'Teaching' Political 'Science'," in Power and Community: Dissenting Essays in Political Science, ed. by Philip Green and Sanford Levinson (New York: Random House, Inc., 1970), p.60.

[6]Ward, What's Wrong With Economics?, p. 208.

[7]Ibid., p. 209.

[8]Levinson, "On 'Teaching' Political 'Science'," p. 76.

[9]Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[10]Ibid., p. 1.

[11]Ward, What's Wrong With Economics?, p. 183.

[12]Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, Teaching as a Subversive Activity (New York: Delacorte Press, 1969), p. 17.

[13]Richard C. Edwards and Arthur Mac Ewan, "The Teaching of Economics," The American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. LX, No. 2, May, 1970, p. 361.

[14]Ronald J. Silvers, "Letting Go in the Classroom," Sociological Inquiry, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 169-178.

[15]We are indebted to John R. Barber, Department of History, Ball State University, for suggestions arising out of his teaching experiences there.

[16]Carl R. Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: C. E. Merrill, 1969), p. 104.

[17]Malcolm S. Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy Versus Pedagogy (New York: Association Press, 1970).